WHAT WE CLAIM IS:

1. A method of detecting the presence of <u>E. coli</u> and/or other coliforms in a sample comprising the steps of:

    (1) applying a medium containing at least one indicator chosen from galactosides and glucuronides, and an agent used to suppress the growth of non-coliform gram-negative bacteria to a support,

    (2) applying a portion of said sample to be evaluated for the presence of <u>E. coli</u> and/or coliforms on the support prepared in step (1),

    (3) incubating the product of step (2) for a time sufficient to cause evidence of growth of <u>E. coli</u> and other coliforms as represented by color change and/or fluorescence, and

    (4) observing the medium for color changes and/or fluorescence to detect the presence or absence of <u>E. coli</u> and/or other coliforms.

2. A method of detecting <u>E. coli</u> and/or other coliforms in a sample in which one wishes to determine the presence or absence of <u>E. coli</u> and/or other coliforms comprising the steps of:

    (1) preparing a growth medium containing at least one indicator chosen from galactosides and glucuronides, and an agent used to suppress the growth of non-coliform gram negative bacteria,

    (2) introducing some of the sample which is to be observed to determine the presence or absence of <u>E. coli</u>

and/or other coliforms into/onto the preparation of step (1),

(3) incubating the product of step (2) for a time sufficient to cause evidence of growth of E. coli and other coliforms as represented by color change and/or fluorescence, and

(4) observing the medium for color changes and/or fluorescence to detect the presence of E. coli and other coliforms.

3. A method of claim 2 wherein, in step (2), a sample of interest is introduced by stabbing with a solid object that has been exposed to said sample of interest.

4. A method of claim 2 wherein, in step (2), a sample is introduced using a loop.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein the agent used to suppress the growth of non-coliform gram-negative bacteria is Cefsulodin.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the Cefsulodin is present at a concentration of from 1 to 25 mg/L.

7. The method of claim 2 wherein the agent used to suppress the growth of non-coliform gram-negative bacteria is Cefsulodin.

8. The method of claim 7 wherein the Cefsulodin is present

at a concentration of from 1 to 25 mg/L.

9. A method of claim 1 wherein the medium applied to the support contains a solidifying agent.

10. A method of claim 2 wherein the medium contains, additionally, a solidifying agent.